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FLOOR DEBATE

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this bill as we have been changing this bill to anticipate, as we did with the first amendment to this bill, to anticipate the payment of further General Funds into these various kinds of programs without putting into them at the same time the reconciling and very fair addition of a certain minimal level of fees to also contribute to the funding of the program. That's what this amendment does and I would ask for your support. Thank you.

PRESIDENT HEINEMAN: Thank you, Senator Beutler. Chair would recognize Senator Schrock.

SENATOR SCHROCK: Mr. Lieutenant Governor, members of the Legislature, Senator Beutler is attempting to amend LB 663, a bill I carried on behalf of Department of Environmental Quality, into LB 619. This is neither the appropriate time or the place to do this. And Senator Beutler wants to talk about what's fair. Well, let me tell you about fairness in the state of Nebraska when it comes to agriculture. Senator Beutler, last time I checked, as it affects agriculture, we have the highest property taxes of any state in the Midwest. We are one of the only states that assesses a tax on personal property. We are trying to be a livestock friendly state. We had a hearing. We had good input from the livestock community and they said let's have an interim study hearing and talk about the issue. Now, I'm sorry, you release my property tax burden and we'll fully fund this with fees, but we have to compete with the states around us, and we're a high tax state when it comes to agriculture. The University of Nebraska wants to cut our ag research. Kansas, for heaven sakes, spends more money on ag research than the state of Nebraska does, and they only have a third of the irrigated acres we have. We are trying to become a livestock friendly state and this would turn that ship around in the other direction. Please let us have an interim study on this issue and study it. I'm...I'd be glad to support your proposal, but do something about property taxes for farmers. Do something about property taxes for those who invest in the livestock facilities. Personal property taxes, we're the only state in the area that has personal property taxes. If you want to apply the revenue from personal property taxes for fees on livestock waste facilities, fine, but I strenuously object to